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Fansteel
Metals
number ten tantalum place muskogee, oklahoma 74401 (918) 687-6303

June 23, 1989

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Water Management Division
Enforcement Branch (6W-E)
Allied Bank Tower at Fountain Place
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

RE: Total Retention Pond Synthetic
Liner Failure
NPDES Permit No. OK 0001643

Gentlemen:

A failure of the liner in our total retention Pond No. 3 on June 18, 1989, caused waste material from that pond to be released into the Arkansas River. The National Response Center was notified on that date. The EPA was notified by Fansteel on June 19, 1989, in accordance with Section D, Paragraph 6, of the above referenced NPDES Permit. This correspondence completes compliance with the above mentioned paragraph.

The failure caused a release of material to the river by overload of the French drain system surrounding the pond. The liquid overflowed the French drain well on the Northeast side of the pond and seeped up through the ground on the West and South sides of the pond. The flow rate could only be estimated at 500 gpm flowing through Outfall 003. It was discovered at 10:00 a.m. and the water was cut-off from the river by way of a dam located at the Outfall at 1:15 p.m. Therefore, approximately 90,000 gallons were released into the Arkansas River. The liquid was sampled as it was being released. A sample of the river was taken upstream and downstream of the release site. All of these samples are being tested at this time for Outfall permit limitations and E.P. toxicity metals. The pH of the material being released was 2.02 standard units. The upstream and downstream pH in the river at the time of release at 12:00 noon was 8.13 and 8.07 standard units respectfully. One hour after the material was shut off to the river, the pH upstream and downstream were 8.15 and 8.16 standard units respectfully.

The river flow was very high at this point in time because of the large quantity of rain received in the area in the past several weeks. The levels of the river the day of the incident and the day after were 458.6 and 458.65 feet respectively. This resulted in flows of 122,600 and 123,600 cubic feet per second on those

two days. These flows were reported by the U.S. Corp of Engineers.

The pond liquid leaking from the impoundment has been retained in a catch pond formed on the West side of the leaking pond. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is overseeing the draining and remediation of the pond and catch pond.

Attached find a statement of the capability of our neutralization system to handle the liquid from Pond 3. This statement shows that we believe the liquid can be pumped out of the ponds in approximately 50 days.

Two engineering firms have been contacted to determine the remediation requirements for the pond and the adjacent soil.

Sincerely,

T. S. CARLILE, JR.
General Manager
Metals Group Muskogee

TSC/bsm

attach.

cc: D. Dillon, OWRB, OKC
R. Simms, OWRB, Tulsa
P. Brown, OSDH, OKC
J.C. Shutler, Co. Health Dept.
J. B. Lambert
M. J. Mocniak
G. F. Scenter